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September 15, 1995

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

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**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

Mr. William F. Caton  
Acting Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Room 222  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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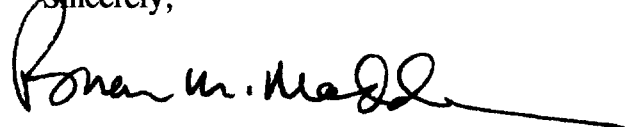
Re: IB Docket No. 95-91

Dear Mr. Caton:

Transmitted herewith on behalf of Entertainment Communications, Inc. ("Entercom") are an original and nine copies of its Comments responding to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in IB Docket No. 95-91.

If any additional information is desired in connection with these Comments, please contact the undersigned counsel.

Sincerely,



Brian M. Madden

Enclosure

cc: All Commissioners  
Roy J. Stewart, Esq.

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BEFORE THE  
**Federal Communications Commission**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

In the Matter of	)	IB Docket No. 95-91
	)	GEN Docket No. 90-357
Establishment of Rules and	)	RM No. 8610
Policies for the Digital Audio	)	PP-24
Radio Satellite Service in the	)	PP-86
2310-2360 Mhz Frequency Band	)	PP-87

To: The Commission

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COMMENTS OF  
ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Entertainment Communications, Inc. ("Entercom"), pursuant to Section 1.415 of the Commission's rules, hereby submits these comments in the above referenced *Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, 10 FCC Rcd 229 (1995) ("Notice"), involving establishment of service rules and policies for the satellite digital audio radio service ("DARS"). Entercom is the general partner of ECI License Company, L.P., which is the licensee of Stations WDSY, WDSY-FM and WXR(B)(FM), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; KMTT and KMTT-FM, Tacoma, Washington; KEGE, Richfield, Minnesota; KLDE(FM), Houston, Texas; KITS(FM), San Francisco, California; WKTK(FM), Crystal River, Florida; WISP(FM), Holmes Beach, Florida; WYUU(FM), Safety Harbor, Florida; KFXX, Oregon City, Oregon; KGON(FM), Portland, Oregon and KNRK(FM), Camus, Washington. Entercom has been a licensee of the Commission for more than 25 years, and is vitally interested in the significant

impact that implementation of satellite DARS will have on the broadcast industry nationwide.

Entercom believes that the Commission must establish service rules and policies for satellite DARS which require that all satellite DARS licensees provide programming specifically dedicated to communities or groupings that are not being addressed by local stations. This will ensure that DARS service will accomplish its intended purpose and not inflict collateral damage on the established radio industry which has served the public interest so well and must be preserved.

**I. The Predictable Destructive Impact of Satellite DARS on Small Market Radio**

All radio stations require an adequate revenue base to survive and a somewhat larger revenue base to provide the non-entertainment programming and community-based activities for which they are licensed to serve the public convenience and necessity.

The revenue base of a radio station is directly related to the station's audience base which is measured by its Average Quarter Hour Share (percent of the persons actually listening to radio) who are tuned to the station during an average quarter hour, and Average Quarter Hour Rating (percent of the market's total available audience which is listening to the station) during an average quarter hour.

The history of radio confirms the common sense observation that stations' average quarter hour shares and ratings tend to fragment in direct proportion to the number of

radio signals which are available to listeners in the market. The more stations which are available to the audience, the smaller the shares each station receives in a market. By simple mathematical division, radio stations in markets with 50 competitive signals average a 2 share. More significantly, experience demonstrates that only a few stations in any market achieve more than two times the average share and only rarely do any exceed three times the average share. The Fragmentation Analysis contained in the attached Schedule 1 demonstrates that in the top 25 markets where the number of existing stations is greatest and the impact of fragmentation is best illustrated, only 5% of the in-market stations achieve in excess of two times the average share, and a mere two stations in all of those markets exceed three times the average share.

This phenomenon of fragmented audience shares and the resultant economic consequences has been observed by the FCC to have occurred in markets where additional signals were introduced under Docket 80-90.

In the event that satellite DARS is authorized in a manner which permits competition in mainstream program formats with existing terrestrial stations, the fragmentation process will over a period of time far eclipse the problems caused by Docket 80-90. Unlike services such as cable radio, which are tied to a cable umbilical cord and are not mobile, or DBS audio, which is tied to a television receiving antenna and not suitable for mobile usage, DARS is specifically designed for mobile as

well as stationary usage. Since the essence of radio's appeal as a medium is its mobility and on-demand presence, the experience with those audio transmission devices is irrelevant.

The electrical industry is clamoring for the opportunity to market a new generation of radio receivers which will offer satellite as well as terrestrial radio channels. As the penetration of the new generation of radio receivers capable of receiving satellite DARS signals reaches critical mass, satellite channels will be placed on an equal reception footing with existing AM and FM stations, and unlike cable or DBS audio, will be mobile and equally available on demand to the consumer, who will be indifferent to the source of the programming or the method of transmission to the new multi-band receiver. The greater the penetration of the market by DARS-capable receivers, the greater the fragmentation of audience shares which will occur as the listening audience receives a greater choice of radio stations.

By the time the penetration of receivers capable of receiving DARS approaches critical mass, the fragmentation of shares will be so great in small markets, where the magnitude of increase in the number of available stations will be greatest and the economic base least supportive, that there will be few if any radio stations that will have the critical mass of audience necessary to survive, let alone render any significant public service to their communities. For example, in a market with four in-market radio stations and a population age 12 or greater (12+)

of 10,000, the present average share of audience is by definition 25 and the share of the leading station may approach the range of a 50 share. In the event that 46 channels of satellite DARS are authorized, the shares of audience which continue to be attracted to the in-market stations will be fragmented and diminished as the number of available radio choices increases more than 12 fold from 4 to 50 channels. By the time the penetration of the new radio receivers approaches critical mass, the most a local station could realistically hope to achieve based on the Fragmentation Analysis set forth in Schedule 1 would be to double the mathematical average of 2 shares per station to a maximum of 4 shares. But unlike the national satellite channels which can succeed economically with even a fraction of a share of a broadly based national audience, a local station which is dependent entirely on its share of the local audience cannot hope to survive with such a share in a small market. As shown on Schedule 2 attached hereto, the average rating or listening percentage to radio during an average quarter hour is 17.2, *i.e.* the number of persons age 12+ listening to all radio stations during an Average Quarter Hour is approximately 17.2% of the total population 12+ in the market. Therefore, a 4 share of a market of 10,000 persons age 12+ would yield an average quarter hour audience of only 69 persons ( $10,000 \times 17.2\% \times 4\%$ ). Obviously, a station in such a market -- indeed stations in markets with much greater populations -- could not attract

sufficient advertising revenue to survive even if they achieved the optimistic goal of doubling the average share in the market.

The concept that a local station will have a significant or built-in advantage based on its local presence is pure mythology. While providing local news and information services in small markets has a substantial impact on cost, it has limited value in attracting and holding audience. Even if a station provides excellent local news and information, and thereby attracts a significant Cume (the number of persons who tune in the station at least once over a period of a week), it is most unlikely to achieve more than a few quarter hours of listening per day from those in its audience who wish to ascertain such information. Unlike newspapers which attract advertising based on circulation (essentially the same concepts as Cume), radio station revenues are predominantly based on average quarter hour shares which require significant Time Spent Listening (TSL). It is therefore inadequate for any radio station simply to attract its listeners once or twice a day for short periods of time. It must be able to maintain its audience for long periods of time in order to generate sufficient TSL to provide an adequate Average Quarter Hour (AQH) share of audience and ratings.

Because of the high cost of providing news and information services, and the limited appeal of such services to audiences (notwithstanding the great public value and on occasion necessity of such services), All News and Information formats are

limited almost exclusively to the very largest markets where the audience base is large enough to accommodate the high turnover ratios of audience and the limited TSL which those audiences provide, and where the market advertising revenues can support the extraordinary costs of the service. Schedule 3 attached demonstrates that in those top 25 markets which have All News and Information stations, those stations average only a 5.3 share of audience. The remaining 94.7 shares of audience in those markets are fragmented among the various entertainment choices. It is significant that of the top 25 markets, only 13 have All News and information stations, while in the other 12 of those markets, including all but two of markets 12 through 25, there are no All News and Information formatted stations. This is because experienced radio broadcasters have determined that such a format either cannot be supported or is not economically desirable even in markets which contain as many as 2,770,000 persons age 12+. Clearly, small radio markets cannot support All News and Information formats under present circumstances even before fragmentation by satellite radio. Indeed, since the overwhelming proportion of radio listening is for entertainment and not for news and information, such programming -- even on a short-form basis (that is, local newscasts) -- cannot be supported financially other than through a substantial share of audience garnered by the station through its entertainment programming and that share will be fragmented and diminished in direct proportion



to the number of increased programming choices available in the market via DARS.

It should be obvious that there is a vast difference between stations having a 2 share in a market with 2,000,000 people and one with a 2 share in a market with 10,000 people. While the former will have an average audience base of approximately 6,880 listeners ( $2,000,000 \times 17.2\%$  using radio in an Average Quarter Hour (see Schedule 3)  $\times 2\%$  share of the listening audience) from which to attract advertising revenue, the latter will have only 35 listeners ( $10,000 \times 17.2\%$  using radio in an Average Quarter Hour  $\times 2\%$  share of the listening audience) from which to attract advertising revenues. No station can survive, let alone render any public service on such an audience base, or, indeed, even on a much larger one. Even were such a station able to garner a 5 share, which would represent an Average Quarter Hour audience of 86 listeners, it would have no hope of survival. The same observation would apply to a 10 share average audience of 172. Small market stations simply cannot survive further fragmentation, particularly that of the gargantuan magnitude being considered with respect to DARS.

The inevitable result of authorization of satellite DARS channels without restriction on their areas of programming will be to eliminate local radio service in small markets well within the period of a generation as satellite DARS penetration through receiver sales approaches critical mass. In the

meantime, DARS will drive many such stations to curtail and then eliminate various informational and public services and to rely more and more on satellite feeds in an effort to stay on the air as their audience base is eroded by the multiple channels offered by direct satellite services.

While it is true that the public in small markets (at least those who can afford the expense of buying a satellite receiver and/or subscribing to a satellite service) will receive a greater variety of program choices, the cost of such choices to all (including those who cannot afford the cost of conversation and/or subscription to satellite radio) will be the elimination of essential and desirable public services, such as school closings, storm warnings, local news and sports, local charity drives, public affairs programming, investigative and ombudsman services, and, ultimately, the total loss of a local community voice. When considering the vast array of other audio entertainment choices already available to the public, such as tapes, CDs, cable audio and DBS audio, as well as other future audio services via computer and PCS, it is hard to fathom how the public convenience and necessity can be served by approving a national over-the-air audio service which predictably and inevitably will eliminate the local radio stations in small markets. These small market stations alone render enormous public service to the communities they serve and can only do so for so long as they can maintain a sufficient share of audience

commensurate with the size of their respective markets to support the public services which they provide.

## **II. The Argument for Satellite Radio**

The case which has been presented for the advent of satellite DARS is twofold: first, the provision of services to underserved areas; and second, the provision of services to audiences which are geographically dispersed so that they do not provide a sufficient audience base in individual markets but do so only on a national or regional basis. That the first argument is incredibly weak is demonstrated by studies which show that there are very few areas which are not served by existing terrestrial radio, and that in excess of 99% of the United States population listens to radio on a regular basis. The second argument has considerably more merit and should be treated as a desirable goal in the public interest so long as it can be achieved as a supplementary service rather than a supplanting service to existing community based radio broadcasting. Happily, there is a path to achieve such a goal without disenfranchising the many small communities which rely on the services rendered by their local radio stations.

## **III. Proposal for a Satellite DARS System Which Will Serve the Public Interest Without Endangering the Present System of Community Based Local Broadcasting.**

The proposal is both simple and elegant in that it will address the target to which it should be directed without the danger of inflicting collateral damage on a system that has worked exceptionally well in the public interest and should be

preserved. Since the only compelling public interest argument for satellite radio is to serve audiences which are so geographically dispersed that they lack sufficient concentration to be economically served by local radio stations, the portion of the spectrum in the S band which has been allocated for satellite DARS service should be restricted to licensing of services specifically dedicated to communities or groupings which are not being addressed by local stations. These DARS services would address, for example, various language or common nationality origin groupings, such as Korean or Vietnamese, who are lacking in radio service in their language or addressed to their common interests; professional or business groupings, such as doctors, lawyers, accountants or engineers or contractors who would benefit from information and commentary concerning their profession or common interests; or subject matter groupings, such as an international affairs channel, a medical information channel or a hobby information channel. An applicant for a license to broadcast on an available satellite DARS channel would have to demonstrate in its application the public convenience and necessity of such a channel, the nature and scope of the programming to be offered on the channel, and that the programming offered is not being provided to any significant extent by existing radio stations. The Commission could then in its discretion grant a license to such applicant to broadcast in accordance with the proposed programming, thereby providing a new and unduplicated service to the public without threat that the

service might duplicate or compete with existing services and undermine the economic underpinning for the providing of local community-based public service.

To any argument that may be made that it will be difficult for the Commission to determine which of various channel applications are in the public interest, I would answer as follows:

1) The number of satellite channels which may be made available at any given time may be limited by the Commission.

2) It is far better for the Commission to aim for programming targets which are in the public interest on a channel-by-channel basis, than to make a wholesale grant to a few individuals or entities to program what they want and for whom they please on multiple channels, since the latter course would have such disastrous consequences to the existing system of local community-based radio stations and the services in the public interest which they provide to their respective communities.

#### **IV. The Proposal is Consistent with Applicable Constitutional and Statutory Authority**

It has been suggested by some that such service rules might be unconstitutional or contrary to the existing communication laws and I therefore wish to address that issue and demonstrate that it is not so. Great deference must be given to the Commission's determinations concerning the provision of service in the public interest. "The Commission's judgment regarding how the public interest is best served is entitled to substantial judicial deference." *FCC v. WNCN Listeners Guild*,

450 U.S. 582, 596 (1981); see also, *Syracuse Peace Council v. FCC*, 867 F.2d 654, 660 (D.D.C. 1989) ("Complete factual support for the Commission's ultimate conclusions is not required since 'a forecast of the direction in which the future public interest lies necessarily involves deductions based on the expert knowledge of the agency,'" citing *WNCN Listeners Guild*, 450 U.S. at 594-95). The establishment of programming requirements that DARS operations address underserved or unserved audiences and needs is in fulfillment of the Commission's mandate to protect the public's rights to receive a diversity of programming formats. *Red Lion Broadcasting Co., Inc. v. FCC*, 395 U.S. 388 (1969). "It is the right of the public to receive suitable access to social, political, esthetic, moral and other ideas and experiences. That right may not be constitutionally abridged either by the Congress or the FCC." *Id.* at 390. The establishment of restrictive service rules for satellite DARS thus comports with the First Amendment. "There is nothing in the First Amendment which prevents the Government from requiring a licensee to share his frequency with others and to conduct himself as a proxy or fiduciary with obligations to present those views and varies which are representative of his community and which would otherwise, by necessity, be barred from the airwaves." *Id.* at 389-390.

"The general power of the FCC to interest itself in the kinds of programs broadcast by licensees has consistently been sustained by the courts against arguments that supervisory power

violates the First Amendment." *Nat'l. Ass'n. of Indep. Television Producers and Distributors v. FCC*, 516 F.2d 526, 536 (2d. Cir. 1975) (citations omitted). This is true regardless of whether the standard of review ultimately applied to DARS service is the stricter standard normally applied to services with large spectrum capacity, such as cable, or the more lenient standard normally applied to services more closely analogous to DARS, such as broadcast, where the physical spectrum is limited. Compare *Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. v. FCC*, 114 S. Ct. 2445, 2469 (1994) (cable) with *Red Lion*, 395 U.S. at 398 (broadcast).

The Commission has adopted regulations that created reserved non-commercial channels in both the FM and TV bands which cannot be devoted to commercial use. Over objections that its actions violated the First Amendment, the Commission adopted other rules, such as the prime time access rule, which limited the nature of programming that could be carried by licensees. These actions, adopted by the Commission in order to ensure that broadcasters operated in the public interest, were found to be in full accord with the First Amendment. *Mt. Mansfield Television, Inc. v. F.C.C.*, 442 F.2d 470 (D.C.C. 1971). That the Commission may have, in the intervening years, as a matter of policy experimented with other means to accomplish the goal of program diversity, see, e.g., *F.C.C. v. WNCN Listeners Guild*, 450 U.S. 582 (1981), does not undermine the constitutionality of the Commission's role in the regulation of broadcasting in furtherance of the public interest. And, as the Supreme Court

observed in *WNCN*, "the Commission should be alert to the consequences of its policies and should stand ready to alter its rule if necessary to serve the public interest more fully." *Id.* at 603. In fulfillment of these responsibilities, the adoption of regulations requiring satellite DARS licensees to utilize DARS channel capacity for the purpose of providing programming services addressing needs not being adequately met are legally permissible.

Both the Commission and proponents of satellite DARS acknowledge that increased radio service to niche audiences is, and should be, a matter of important governmental regulatory interest. *See, e.g., Amendment to the Commissions's Rules with Regard to the Establishment and Regulation of New Digital Audio Radio Services*, 10 FCC Rcd 2310, 2314 (1995) ("We continue to find that a nationwide service such as that being proposed in satellite DARS is in fact capable of furthering Congressional intent to distribute radio services widely"). The Commission's interest in providing radio service to these niche audiences enhances, rather than suppresses, free speech. The Commission's objectives in this regard derive directly from evidence in the record of the DARS proceeding that niche audiences have historically been underserved or unserved by traditional radio services and is in no way related to a desire to suppress or promote the speech of one particular minority, ethnic or niche population over another. In the *Notice* in this proceeding, the Commission observed that "[s]atellite DARS also could expand and



complement the audio program choices available to listeners. By offering a nationally based service, satellite DARS providers could target niche audiences that have not been served by traditional local radio but now could be served as an aggregate national audience." Notice at 2.

The Commission's promulgation of regulations requiring satellite DARS licensees to devote channel capacity to specific underserved or unserved programming needs is an appropriately drawn means of serving a public interest need which has been determined by the Commission to be compelling. So long as the rules adopted by the Commission regarding DARS programming to such audiences and groupings promote a substantial government purpose that would be achieved less effectively in the absence of the rules, the means used by the Commission to achieve the interest need not be the least restrictive alternative. Cf. *Quincy Cable TV, Inc. v. FCC*, 768 F.2d 1434, 1459 (D.D.C. 1985) ("Once we have determined that the agency action falls within the wide range of constitutionally permissible options, our task is at an end").

The record before the Commission in this proceeding specifically demonstrates that the "views and voices" which are "representative" of minority, ethnic and niche audiences nationwide have been traditionally "barred from the airwaves." See *Red Lion* at 389-90. Under these circumstances, "the Government is permitted to put restraints on licensees in favor of others whose views should be expressed on the unique medium.

But the people as a whole retain their interest in free speech by radio and their collective right to have the medium function consistently with the ends and purposes of the First Amendment. It is the right of the viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters, which is paramount." *Id.* at 390 (citations omitted).

Respectfully submitted,

**ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNICATIONS, INC.**

By Joseph M. Field  
Joseph M. Field  
President

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Suite 10  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

September 15, 1995

**SCHEDULE 1: FRAGMENTATION ANALYSIS, TOP-25 MARKETS**

<b>MARKET</b>	<b># IN-MARKET SIGNALS</b>	<b>AVERAGE SHARE</b>	<b>LEADER SHARE</b>	<b>LEADER SHARE MULTIPLE</b>	<b>STATIONS THAT EXCEED 2x AVERAGE</b>	<b>STATIONS THAT EXCEED 3x AVERAGE</b>
NEW YORK	41	2.4	6.7	2.79	3	0
LOS ANGELES	44	2.3	5.2	2.26	2	0
CHICAGO	38	2.6	6.0	2.31	2	0
SAN FRANCISCO	51	2.0	6.9	3.45	4	1
PHILADELPHIA	25	4.0	7.3	1.83	0	0
DETROIT	28	3.6	9.5	2.64	2	0
DALLAS/FT. WORTH	34	2.9	6.0	2.07	1	0
WASHINGTON DC	30	3.3	8.4	2.55	1	0
HOUSTON	30	3.3	6.4	1.94	0	0
BOSTON	30	3.3	7.9	2.39	2	0
MIAMI	36	2.8	5.8	2.07	2	0
ATLANTA	19	5.3	11.9	2.25	1	0
SEATTLE/TACOMA	29	3.4	6.2	1.82	0	0
NASSAU/SUFFOLK	17	5.9	5.7	.97	0	0
SAN DIEGO	31	3.2	7.2	2.25	2	0
MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL	23	4.3	12.0	2.79	2	0
ST. LOUIS	30	3.3	13.2	4.00	5	1
BALTIMORE	22	4.5	8.5	1.89	0	0
PITTSBURGH	27	3.7	12.7	3.43	2	0
PHOENIX	32	3.1	8.9	2.87	3	0
TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG	24	4.2	7.8	1.86	0	0
CLEVELAND	22	4.5	8.4	1.87	0	0
DENVER	28	3.6	9.1	2.53	1	0
PORTLAND	26	3.8	8.3	2.18	1	0
CINCINNATI	20	5.0	12.9	2.58	1	0

source: Duncan's American Radio Spring 1995, reporting Arbitron Spring 1995 Ratings, Mon-Sun 6A-Mid, 12+ Metro.

**SCHEDULE 2: PERCENTAGE OF ALL PERSONS LISTENING TO RADIO  
DURING AN AVERAGE QUARTER HOUR IN TOP-25 MARKETS**

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**MARKET**

NEW YORK	18.5%
LOS ANGELES	17.6
CHICAGO	18.2
SAN FRANCISCO	15.7
PHILADELPHIA	18.8
DETROIT	17.6
DALLAS/FT.WORTH	17.1
WASHINGTON DC	16.9
HOUSTON	17.4
BOSTON	17.6
MIAMI	18.9
ATLANTA	16.2
SEATTLE/TACOMA	16.1
NASSAU/SUFFOLK	17.5
SAN DIEGO	16.7
MINNEAPOLIS/ST.PAUL	17.4
ST. LOUIS	17.4
BALTIMORE	18.0
PITTSBURGH	17.2
PHOENIX	16.4
TAMPA/ST.PETERSBURG	16.7
CLEVELAND	17.1
DENVER	17.1
PORTLAND	14.9
CINCINNATI	16.0
 TOP-25 MARKET AVERAGE	 17.2%

source: Arbitron Spring 1995 Ratings, AQH Ratings, Mon-Sun 6A-Mid; 12+ Metro.

**SCHEDULE 3: AQH SHARE OF LISTENING AUDIENCE OF  
ALL NEWS & INFORMATION STATIONS IN TOP-25 MARKETS**

<b>MARKET</b>	<b>12+ POPULATION</b>	<b>AQH SHARE OF LISTENING AUDIENCE</b>
NEW YORK	14,124,200	6.9
LOS ANGELES	9,656,900	5.7
CHICAGO	6,880,700	7.8
SAN FRANCISCO	5,330,700	6.9
PHILADELPHIA	4,115,300	7.3
DETROIT	3,660,200	5.2
DALLAS/FT. WORTH	3,562,600	3.5
WASHINGTON DC	4,560,000	3.2
HOUSTON	4,120,000	5.0
BOSTON	3,780,000	7.9
MIAMI	2,843,000	2.0
ATLANTA	2,770,000	0
SEATTLE/TACOMA	2,696,500	5.9
NASSAU/SUFFOLK	2,269,900	0
SAN DIEGO	2,212,500	0
MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL	2,146,200	0
ST. LOUIS	2,098,500	0
BALTIMORE	2,049,500	0
PITTSBURGH	2,031,400	1.5
PHOENIX	1,932,800	0
TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG	1,864,200	0
CLEVELAND	1,766,100	0
DENVER	1,705,800	0
PORTLAND	1,563,300	0
CINCINNATI	1,548,800	0

source: Duncan's American Radio Spring 1995, reporting  
Arbitron Spring 1995 Ratings, Mon-Sun 6A-Mid, 12+ Metro.